Riots - 1928

D.C.

RACE RIOT IS QUELLED IN D. C.

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 5—A race riot that threatened to cause considerable blood-shed and ended only after three persons were injured, one seriously, occurred here Sunday. The trouble started when a white patrolman arrested Frank Parker, 31 years old, for disorderly conduct and struck him over the head with the butt of his pistol.

The policeman suffered abrasions on his left ear and lost his revolver and baton in the battle. William R. Embrey, 23, white, was kicked in the stomach and Parker suffered a probable fracture of the skull from the blow over the head.

The angry crowd that attacked the policeman after he had struck Parker over the head was dispersed by police reserves. Parker was treated at Emergency Hospital and placed under guard and a technical charge of investigation lodged against him.

Riots-1928.

Houston.

Only Three Houston Martyrs Confined

Two Will Be Paroled This Year Leaving

ONLY ONE IN PRISON

N. A. A. C. P. Not to Stop Until All Are Released

New York, Jan. 6—In response to a letter of inquiry by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Dwight F. Davis, U. S. Secretary of War has sent the following reply to the N. A. A. C. P. National Office.

"In response to your inquiry of the 28th ult. there are now remaining in confinement in the United States Disciplinary Barracks, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, only three of the so-called Houston rioters. In February, 1927 the sentences of the twenty of these prisoners then remaining in confinement were reduced by eighteen months, thus advancing the date of months, thus advancing the date of their eligibility for home parole six months. Sixteen became eligible for parole on June 9, 1927, and were released on that date or shortly thereafter, with the exception of one whose application was not favorably considered on account of bad conduct. Two others were released on parole in November, 1927, and two will be eligible for parole the latter part of February, 1928. If their applications are approved there will then remain only one whose application was disapproved."

In connection with this letter, James Weldon Johnson, Secretary of the N. A. A. C. P. said:

"The N. A. A. C. P. has fought for the release of these Houston rioters ever since its investigator was sent to the scene in 1917 and its attorney defended the men after the Association had appealed to President Wilson and had saved ten men from further death sentences. We have repeatedly said that our efforts would cease only after the last man was out of prison. We are happy that this end now seems close at hand."

Tribune. Savannah, Ga. 1-12-28.

Riots-1928

Illinois.

CHICAGO RACE CONFLICT LOOMS

Murder Charge Against Negro Is Cause

CHICAGO, Feb. 10.—An extremely tense situation exists today in Chicago's South Side district, inhabited chiefly by Negro workers, where 200 extra policemen, heavily armed and in automobiles are touring the district watching for signs of a threatened conflict involving thousands of Negroes who have been laid off stockyard payrolls. The inhabitants of the neighborhood are almost in a panic and many fear the outbreak of race riots such as those of 1919 in which 30 were killed and many others wounded.

Accused of Murder.

The present trouble started when Elliot Ross, one of the many unemployed Negro stockyard workers, was trapped in a house by police who accused him of the murder of James Ellis and Charles Miller, who were working in the plant of the Omaha Packing Co. It is said that Ellis caused Elliot's dismissal. Elliot resisted arrest and gun play followed in which two police officers, Edward Murphy and Eugene Keegan, as well as Elliot himself were killed. Owing to the brutal treatment of Negro prisoners, many Negroes have lately chosen death rather than submit to the torture of the third degree.

In a quarter of an hour there were five thousand aroused Negroes crowding the house in which the shooting took place.

Many Unemployed.

The stockyards have been importing thousands of Negroes from the south and many are now unemployed thus creating an extremely dangerous situation among the workers, whose conditions grow daily more and more miserable. The Negro workers feel strongly that there has been race discrimination in the laying-off of the many workers.

The situation causing the famous 1919 race struggle was almost identical with that in the Negro district today.

Riots—1928. New York.

LENOX AVENUE CROWD MAKES DIFFICULTY FOR PATROLMAN ATTEMPTING TO MAKE ARREST

Clarence Donald Attacks Mrs. Chavis And Arresting Him Brings Out Reserves and Fire Department

The usual quiet of a Sunday evening on Lenox avenue at 139th street was rudely dispelled when Clarence Donald of 2338 Seventh avenue in company with two associates, all said to have been drinking, went in search of another acquaintance named "Robert," and insisted on finding him in the apartment of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Chavis at 559 Lenox avenue.

And when they were told that "Robert" was unknown there, they tried smashing in the door with a hammer, grabbing Mrs. Zerlina Chavis, Henry's wife, and beating her. Mrs. Chavis escaped from Donald and ran to the next floor upstairs, and as Donald and his companions left the building, she leaned out the window and called Traffic Patrolman Charles Kubick of Traffic C. The officer left his post and chased Donald, who was running up the avenue.

Felled With A Kick.

Kubick caught the fleeing man at 139th street, and as he grabbed Donald, to place him under arrest, Donald let go a terrific kick, striking the policeman in the groin. The officer fell to the ground and Donald is reported to have jumped him.

A crowd quickly gathered but eye-witnesses residents of the neighborhood some of them business men, declare that reports in the daily papers telling of thousands of Negroes rioting were without foundation. The usual crowds, that are drawn by any excitement naturally put in an appearance, and some of the hot-headed made to assist the prisoner from what they evidently thought was another case of unwarranted police brutality.

Other officers quickly put in appearance on the scene, including Patrolmen Irwin Young and Herman DeStella of the 16th Precinct, who were on duty in the neighborhood, and they were joined by Patrolman Samuel McFadden, a Negro officer from the same station, who was off duty and in civilian clothes.

No Guns Were Used.

These men rushed through the crowd and surrounded Patrolman Kubick, who was badly hurt from Donald's kick. At first, the officers used their hands in attempting to quiet the crowd and to subdue the crowd's demonstrations. As the crowd became more energetic in its effort to aid Donald, the officers had to resort to their nightsticks. No attempt was made to use a gun, nor was any weapon drawn by either of the officers mentioned.

But when Patrolman Richardson arrived on the scene he drew his revolver and used it as a threatening means by which to make through the crowd to the assistance of his brother officers and their prisoner, the crowd, by this time, having become an almost impenetrable mass surrounding the officers and Donald.

Fre Trucks Called Out.

Finding it impossible to control the crowd, many of whom exhibited evidences of being embittered against the white police, the call was sent out for the Reserves, and this was responded to from the West 135th street, the West 152nd street, the West 123rd street and the East 126th street stations, including the emergency squad from the West 152nd street station, which arrived in its truck carrying the regulation machine gun and rifles. These were followed by fire apparatus from several engine houses, and the massive trucks were manouvered into positions that cut the crowd into small segements and led to their being dispersed more rapidly. But not a rifle or machine gun was fired, nor did the Reserves use their guns.

The only pistol shot in evidence during the entire disturbance was fired by someone from the roof of one of the buildings in the neighborhood, whose identity was not discovered.

When finally the crowds dispersed, Kubick and his prisoner were taken to the West 135th street station where doctors were called from Harlem Hospital to treat the injuries they had received. And then it was discovered that Patrolman McFadden and Young had sustained broken hands and DeStella had severe cuts and bruises. Patrolman Kubick was taken to Harlem Hospital for treatment later being sent to his home. The other officers were treated at the station and went home on sick report. Besides the bodily hurts, the uniforms of all of the officers were badly damaged.

Donald Only One Arrested.

Donald was held on a charge of felonious assault, being taken to Harlem Hospital and placed in the prison ward. He had been cut and bruised in the melee. He is 36 years and booked as a laborer. The two men who were with him disappeared in the excitement.

The only arrest made was that of Donald the officers making no effort to take into custody any of the crowd. They were simply ordered to disperse and this they finally did. Lenox avenue quickly regained its wonted calm, but several extra offcers remained on duty in that neighborhood through the rest of Sunday evening.

What Eyewitnesses Say.

The New York Evening Post on Monday carried a news story in that both Negro and white policehad been withdrawn from the vicinity and that no further trouble was anticipated. The Post interviewed Alderman Fred R. Moore, who told the reporter that the disturbance "came up like a thunderstorm and disappeared as quickly," and that at no time was there a semblance of race rioting.

That there was no race feeling in the matter is shown in the fact that both Negro and whte policemen were concerned, one of the colored officers not even being on duty at the time.

People living in the vicinity of 139th street and Lenox avenue tell conflicting stories as to the size of the crowd. One man, who has a moving and express business, said that most of the crowd gathered after the arrival of the reserves, and at no time did they number more than a thousand people.

Another resident told of the arrival of the firemen from the 135th street hook and ladder company who assisted in dispersing the crowd by turning the hose on.

Riots - 1928.

New York.

A Race Riot in Harlem is Quelled by Water

(Special to The Eagle.)

New York, July 22.—When Policeman Henry DeStella attempted to arrest Clarence Donald, a well known musician, after the policeman heard a woman screaming from a Lenox Avenue building, a fight ensued between the patrolman and Donald. Donald knocked DeStella down before the policeman subdued him, and he kicked Policeman Charles Rudell, who had gone to DeStella's aid. A crowd of colored people assembled and tried to liberate Donald from the policemen. A call was sent in for the Reserves and they responded from five stations, together with the police emergency squads. With this aggregation failing to disperse the crowds which had gathered, it was necessary to call out the fire apparatus with the result that when he hose was turned on there was a general dispersal of those who had gathered.

It was reported that 3,000 colored people assembled in a short time.

Donald was accused of breaking down the door of a woman's apartment on Lenox Avenue.

HERALD

Geneva - Ind

JUL 27 1928

The battle of "2500 negro rioters" with "150 police" in the Harlem section of New York City—a battle precipitated by the arrest of a negro accused of beating a woman of his own race, a battle ended only by calling out of machine-gun protected reserves—may serve to remind the new North of some of the conditions that both the old and new South have been up against. It also serves to make citizens of Adams county grateful that we have neither a black belt nor a foreign element to contend with. You cannot go anywhere and find a more nearly 100 per cent. white American population than in old Adams county—and by 100 per cent, we don't mean K. K. K.

NEW YORK TIMES

JUL 31 1928

KINGS HAD RACE RIOT SEVERAL YEARS AGO

Recent Harlem Fight Reminds Brooklyn Patrolmen of Prince Street Fray.

NEGRO KILLED, MANY HURT

Clubs and Guns Clear Vicinity as Crazed Man Runs Amuck—Sailors Form a Flying Wedge.

The recent race riot in Harlem at Lenox Avenue and 139th Street brought back to a few remaining veteran Brooklyn detectives the memories of one of Brooklyn's worst race riots. The riot occured in "the jungles," the black belt of Brooklyn, on Oct. 13, 1918. One man was killed and eighteen others—twelve of them policemen—were clubbed or stabbed.

The riot started at 1 o'clock in the afternoon when James Wright, a tall, 200-pound negro, drew an eight-inch West Indian shark knife and ran wild in Prince Street, near Myrtle Avenue. In five minutes after Wright had started using his knife, excited negroes, armed with revolvers, knives, stones and bottles, swarmed out of the houses of the exclusively negro section and surrounded Prince Street, where six policemen were dodging about trying to close in on the crazed negro.

Thirty minutes later Wright was dead in the old Adams Street Station, scores of the rioters had been beaten senseless and patrolling reserves from the Adams and Poplar Street Stations had restored order.

Began in Second-Hand Shop.

The riot started in the second-hand house furnishing store of Samuel Levine & Son at 160 Myrtle Avenue. A customer entered the store and began examining stoves. While the proprietor's son was showing the wares, Walter Smith, a negro, came into the store. Smith, squat and muscular, was intoxicated, according to eyewitnesses. He began to abuse the younger Levine.

The latter finally persuaded Smith to start toward the door. Just then, however, Levine accidentally dropped the door of a stove. Apparently Smith thought Levine had tried to throw something at him, for he wheeled and punched Levine in the face. When the negro followed this up with a rush, Levine snatched up the stove door and beat the negro on the head.

Smith ran to the street shouting for help. Wright, a friend of Smith, was passing. He rallied to the support of Smith, and other negroes with a miscellaneous assortment of weapons ran to the two men. While Wright exhorted the crowd, Smith re-entered the shop and began to volley blows on Samuel Levine, the proprietor. The latter's daughter beat off the negro's attack with a poker and Smith, his face crisscrossed with cuts, retreated to the sidewalk.

A telephone call was sent to the Adams Street Station, where a riot call was relayed to Inspector George McDonald at Brooklyn Headquarters. While the reserves were running down Myrtle Avenue, to the scene, six policemen responded from nearby beats. Three scattering volleys fired over the heads of the crowd, estimated at 2,000, cleared Prince Street of all but Wright.

Stray Shots Fly.

He stood squarely in the middle of the street, knife in hand, and his shirt half torn off. As the policemen with revolvers out circled closer to the negro, bottles and now and then a shot came from the houses. Meanwhile the policemen, anxious to take the negro alive, walked in a narrowing circle about him.

Finally Patrolman Cowley, of Inspector McDonald's staff, darted at Wright and the two, closely gripped, fought for a chance to use their weapons. For several minutes they struggled, the other policemen looking on and waiting an opportunity to use their revolvers. The rioting negroes in the houses on either side ceased their firing and watched.

It seemed as if Cowley would win, but the negro, although he had a bullet in his back and another in his leg, bent the policeman back and then used his knife. As Cowley staggered back and fell, one of the policemen fired three times and the crazed colored man dropped.

One hundred reserves under Captain William Coleman charged around the corner of Prince Street, and, using their clubs, cleared the doorways. Meanwhile, 200 sailors from the Brooklyn Navy Yard who were on leave in the vicinity formed a flying wedge and scattered the crowd of negroes in Myrtle Avenue.

The bluejackets had small success, however, for the crowd again closed together after the wedge had passed. Nightsticks and the police, broken heads, and a few shots fired in the air finally swept Myrtle Avenue free.

NEW YORK WORLD

JUL 24 1928

NO MOB RULE FOR NEW YORK

The beating of four policemen by a Harlem mob on Sunday was an ugly occurrence which the leaders of the Negro race in that great community of colored folk should not allow to pass unnoticed. It should be made plain by every agency of public authority, and should be emphasized by private advice, that New York has no room for mob rule.

Clarence Donald, a Negro, was accused of breaking his way into the apartment of Henry Chabis and beating Chabis and his wife. It is a serious accusation. Policeman Kubell was acting within the line of duty in arresting Donald for arraignment; nor was there the slightest reason to suppose that Donald would not have his day in court and be fairly tried. It was to the interest of the community, and his own right, that he should have such fair trial and be either convicted or cleared of the serious charge made against him. The men who beat and badly injured Kubell, who injured less seriously three other policemen sent to his assistance, who fired revolvers and threw bottles from windows and whom it required the efforts of a strong force of officers to disperse were no friends of their race.

The courts of the city are open to do equal justice to all. It is their province, and they are competent, to weigh charges of misconduct preferred against citizens of whatever race or color. There is not the slightest excuse for interfering with officers in the discharge of their duties, in Harlem or anywhere else, and it will not be tolerated.

BRUTALITY, NOT BRAINS

The Amsterdam News presents herewith a verified report of the cause of Sunday's near-riot --- a disturbance which for a time threatened to bring injury or death to hundreds. Brutality, not brains, seems predominant in the mind of the average white police officer in Harlem and unless something is done about it immediately by Police Commissioner Warren and others who exercise direct authority over the police force, consequences of a serious nature are compelled to follow. The police force in Harlem must be rid of both white and colored officers who use their uniforms as a cloak behind which to commit assault and murder.

Three thousand people can't be wrong. There must have been and there was provocation on the part of several members of the police force for Sunday's disturbance. The sight of a man with upraised hands being clubbed by a policeman is sickening. It is cowardly. It is one of those sights which men and women cannot endure, no matter what happens.

Men walk into the police precincts and come out on stretchers. Why? Simply because the assault and murder of persons placed under arrest is condoned by those in authority.

It's time to call a halt before serious consequences follow. Let brains, not brutality, rule.—THE EDITOR.

Riots – 1928.

Pennsylvania.

PHILADELPHIA RACE RIOT ENDS WITH TWO HURT

Philadelphia, Pa.—(ANP)—When William Strein, white, jostled Mack Curry while passing through the 1900 block on North Croskey Street, last night, he started a deal of trouble, in fact, a riot. The street is being re-paved which makes walking rather difficult, the passageway being extremely narrow. The two men met and when one jostled the other an altercation arose, whereby it is alleged that Curry drew a knife and stabbed Strein in the back. Some residents of the street saw him fall and ran to his aid, and when Curry noted this he called for aid. A large crowd gathered, and when the white residents attempted to capture Curry, a riot started. The paving bricks which were piled high were used, a general fight following. It is said that more than fifty men took part in the fight, which was at its height when police arrived. Curry was placed under arrest.

The officer shot Curry who was making his escape. The bullet lodged in his back. The rioters white and colored, filed, only Curry being arrested, after having his wound dressed at the Women's Homeopathic Hospital. He is suffering from a deep wound in the side. Strein, not seriously wounded, was taken to the Northwestern General Hospital, where he was treated for a multiple lacerations and contusions, including a knife wound in the left back.

Riots - 1928.

Historical.

REVIEW

Aiken - S. C

JAN 27 1928

HISTORICAL BUILDING AT HAMBURG DESTROYED BY FIRE

What cannon balls and rifle bullets could not do over 50 years ago was accomplished Saturday night by fire when flames destroyed the old Hamburg bank building, just across the river from Augusta. The destruction of the building removed forever one of the most historic structures in this section of the country, for it was in and around the building destroyed Saturday night where the Hamburg riot occurred 50 years ago. At the time of the riot the building was used as an armory for negro soldiers under command of the notorious Prince Rivers negro, then commander of the negro militia and state senator from Aiken county. This was after the War Between the States and Hamburg was under carpetbag rule. Rivers holding sway over that entire section; having his own sodiers and presiding as trial justice.

Just as the walls of the structure toppled in Saturday night, so did the end of Rivers' regime topple, following the death of young McKie Merriwether, heroic Carolina boy who fell dead in front of the building with a bullet in his brain. His death infuriated his comrades who swept into the building in the face of a rain of lead poured from the windows of the structure by at least a hundred rifles in the hands of negoes who had barricaded themselves within to fight off the whites. From Augusta militiamen crossed to aid the Carolinians with a cannon, and at the request of Gen. M. C. Butler, the cannon was loaded with small pieces of iron and fired into the building. With rifle balls pouring into the structure from all sides by the white citizens on the out side, and the appearance of a cannon, the negroes began to flee under the cover of darkness and in the space of a few minutes the building was in the hands of the citizens. Over 30 negroes who composed the rifle party in the building were captured and it is related that swift justice was dealt to the guilty parties.

Well Erected Structure

The building which was around 100 years old was two stories in height and well built. It was said that the rafters and staircases were of mahogany. The building during the days of Henry Schultz, founder of Hamburg, which was then larger than Augusta, was the most important structure in the town, being used for banking purposes and town administration work. When Augusta started growing Hamburg started dwindling, and after the riot the town became a village, composed practically of all negroes. It is today, just Hamburg with a negro population of about 500 persons.

Probably there is in Augusta today some men and women who will remember this olds tructure very well, for it was in that building where Judge Schiller presided and wed hundreds of young couples who left this side of the Savannah river to become husband and wife.

Origin of Fire Undetermined

The fire originated in the lower part of the building from an unknown cause, and in the space of a few minutes the blaze had enveloped the entire structure, with flames bursting through the roof. A dull red glow at first, soon spread into brilliant red reflection that could be seen from all sections of Augusta and Carolina.

With the flames mounting several hundred feet into the air, frantic appeals were made by the negroes in the vicinity for help. The Augusta and North Augusta fire departments dispatched several machines to the scene, but due to the lack of water facilities the firemen could render no aid. They directed their efforts, however, in preventing the flames from destroying the wooden section of the Southern Railway trestle close by.

While the fire was at its height in the old brick building and negro women screaming and crying over the possiblity of their adjoining homes being destroyed, a second fire was discovered in a wooden building about a thousand yards north of the big blaze. This added to the excitement and confusion, and for a short time the little village was like a madhouse with women screaming and men throwing household furniture out of homes in close proximity to the flames. The second fire believed to have been of incendiary origin nearly trapped a negro man who went into the house to save household goods. This building like the first was soon a heap of ashes.